

## Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3645

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMCONSUL CAPETOWN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION NATO

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR AO PO

SUBJECT: AMCONSUL LUANDA ON ALMEIDA SANTOS ON ANGOLA

CINCLANT AND CINCEUR FOR POLADS

REF: LISBON 3141

1. ALMEIDA SANTOS' VIEWS ON THE INEVITABLE DESTRUCTION OF MPLA,

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THE NATURE OF THE WHITE EXODUS AND THE TIMING OF THE CIVIL WAR ARE

ALMOST IDENTICAL TO THE VIEWS WE HELD PRIOR TO THE APRIL 28-MAY 1 FIGHTING IN LUANDA. SINCE THEN MPLA'S RAPID MILITARY BUILD-UP, BETTER FIGHTING ABILITY, HIGHER DEGREE OF INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE AND AGGRESSIVENESS AS WELL AS MOBUTU'S EMERGENT ATTITUDES ON CABINDA/FNLA CAST SIGNIFICANT DOUBT ON SANTOS' PRINCIPAL PREDICTION, THAT MPLA IS DOOMED.

2. FURTHER POINTS:

A. THE WHITE EXODUS DURING AUG-DEC 1974 WAS LARGELY AS DESCRIBED BY SANTOS, I.E. ALMOST ALL WOMEN AND CHILDREN EXCEPT DURING THE FIRST AUGUST WAVE WHICH INCLUDED WHITE SHOPKEEPERS BURNED OUT OF THE MUCEQUES. NOW, HOWEVER, IT ENCOMPASSES A NORMAL PROPORTION OF FAMILY HEADS AS WELL. RECENT BOOKINGS ARE ALMOST ALL SOLID, NOT MERELY FALBACK OPTIONS.

B. DIAMANG IS SHUTTING DOWN. MOREOVER, MINEIRA DE LOBITO (IRON MINES), TECHNICALLY BANKRUPT FOR THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS, IS BEING PUBLICLY WRITTEN OFF.

C. TIMING OF THE CIVIL WAR. IT'S ALREADY STARTED, A FORM OF "SITZKRIEG" THAT SHOULD LAST UNTIL THE PORTUGUESE LEAVE. THEN PARTITION, SEE PARA 5 BELOW.

3. WITH HINDSIGHT, PAST PGOP SUPPORT FOR MPLA WHEN FNLA HELD A CLEAR BALANCE OF MILITARY POWER IN LUANDA AND ELSEWHERE IN ANGOLA (EXCEPT CABINDA) WAS CRUCIAL. FNLA FAILED TO WIPE OUT MPLA BECAUSE IT FEARED - CORRECTLY OR NOT - PORTUGUESE INTERVENTION. HOWEVER THE PORTUGUESE MILITARY PRESENCE HERE IS PROBABLY NO LONGER AN IMPORTANT FACTOR FOR A REASON ALLUDED TO BY SANTOS, THE TROOPS WON'T FIGHT EXCEPT DEFENSIVELY. (PARA 4 REFTEL). BY THE NUMBERS MPLA IS CATCHING UP AND IT ALREADY LEADS QUALITATIVELY. THERE IS NO WAY IT WILL BE DESTROYED IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

4. SURPRISINGLY, WE MAY BE MORE BULLISH ON MPLA'S PROSPECTS THAN ARE MANY OF ITS ADHERENTS. MULTIPLE REPORTS ARE REACHING US OF A WIDESPREAD ATTITUDE WITHIN MPLA THAT ITS NOW OR NEVER, IF WE LOSE NOW ITS UNDERGROUND AND BACK TO THE GUERRILLA WAR, THIS TIME AGAINST AN FNLA-UNITA GOVERNMENT.

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5. IN SPITE OF SANTOS' PREDICTION OF AN FNLA-UNITA VICTORY, OUR GUESS NOW IS DE FACTO PARTITION ROUGHLY ALONG ETHNIC LINES WITH INTERMITTENT CROSS-BORDER WARFARE. THIS IS, OF COURSE, NO ONE'S FIRST CHOICE - EACH WOULD LIKE IT ALL - AND THERE WILL BE CONSTANT TALK OF "REUNIFICATION, PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT", ETCM. HOWEVER, UNLESS THERE ARE DRASTIC LEADERSHIP CHANGES IN BOTH FNLA AND MPLA IT WILL REMAIN TALK. IN SPITE OF HIS UNDENIABLE QUALITIES AND BRILLIANT POLITICAL FOOTWORK, SAVIMBI IS ONLY AN

IMPORTANT POWER FACTOR OUTSIDE THE SOUTH IF HE UNITES FIRMLY WITH FNLA TO PUT MPLA IN A NORTH-SOUTH NUTCRACKER, PROGRESSIVELY PUSHING IT BACK TOWARD LUANDA AND ULTIMATELY DEFEATING IT PN THE CITY ITSELF. THAT WOULD BE A LONG DRAWN OUT PROJECT. UNTIL SAVIMBI COMMITS HIMSELF TO SUCH A COURSE, UNITA IS JUST A SIDESHOW IN THE PRESENT CIRCUS. EARLIER MANY OBSERVERS, EVEN SOME HERE, DISCOUNTED PARTITION ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT HAD NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE IN AFRICA IN SPITE OF CENTRIFUGAL ETHNIC FORCES. HOWEVER NEVER HAS AN AFRICAN COUNTRY, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, APPROACHED INDEPENDENCE WITH THREE DISTINCT, ANTAGONISTIC AND REASONABLY WELL-EQUIPPED ARMIES.

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